



GUARDIAN OF PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE

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Preparedness and Planning

NOAA Weather Radio Audio Available on the Internet

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has announced that [audio from the NOAA Weather Radio \(NWR\) channels](#) is now available online, either as streaming audio or as MP3s and podcasts. Numerous National Weather Service offices are uploading audio files of weather radio messages to their websites. The audio files available vary



by site, but typically contain routine messages such as forecasts, hourly weather roundups, and climate summaries. These audio files are an accessible resource for individuals with disabilities, and can be used to keep consumers updated with warnings and post-event information for all types of hazards – including natural (such as earthquakes or avalanches), environmental (chemical releases or oil spills), and public safety (such as AMBER alerts or 911 Telephone outages).

Donning and Disposal Instructions for NIOSH-Approved Particulate Respirators

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory has been updating the list of approved disposable particulate respirators to include the donning process and user instructions. If the instructions for a model you are using are not listed, NIOSH has not yet received the information from the approval holder. The current [list of approved respirators](#) can be viewed online.

National Emergency Responder Credentialing System

This document, produced by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, describes baseline and additional criteria for the [National Emergency Response Credentialing System](#). The Public Health/Medical Working Group determined the job titles listed here to be the most commonly requested public health and medical personnel in a state-to-state mutual aid-based response.

Public Health Emergency Exercise Toolkit

The New York Consortium for Emergency Preparedness Continuing Education released a revised Public Health Emergency Exercise Toolkit, which includes the 2007 Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) reference forms. Intended to guide health agency staff in developing, implementing and evaluating emergency exercise drills and exercises, the toolkit includes templates, checklists and forms to assist with every stage of the exercise process. The [toolkit](#) is available for download free of charge.

News

Caring for Sick at Home

This hour-long DVD provides practical, detailed information on caring for ill persons, including those with influenza, at home. See [page 2](#) for more information.

1918-1919 Flu Pandemic Info

This website from the Department of Health and Human Services contains biographies of those who lived during the pandemic, what it was like to live in each state during that time, and much more. See [page 3](#) for more information.

State Launches Carbon Monoxide and Mercury Websites

These websites from the Michigan Department of Community Health provide information on prevention of illness due to exposure and action steps that can be taken when exposure occurs. The websites address the needs of the general public, health departments, businesses, and workers. See [page 5](#) for more information.

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Read the Next *Guardian* Issue:
January 11, 2008

Communications

Caring for the Sick at Home When It's the Only Option

The [hour-long DVD](#) provides practical, detailed information on caring for ill persons, including those with influenza, at home. It is aimed at non-medical care providers. The DVD provides information on: infection control (including hand washing and disinfection); personal protective equipment (PPE) for care providers; basic nursing skills (including bathing, nutrition and feeding, monitoring intake and output, monitoring vital signs, postural drainage, etc.); signs and treatment of dehydration; and management of death, dying, and grief. The segmented approach makes it possible to view a section and return later to the next section.

Washington's Emergency Communications Toolkit

This well-organized, useful [website](#) provides tools to guide effective emergency risk communications for public information officers (PIOs) and other communicators. A series of checklists offers specific guidance to meaningfully advance planning and communication activities. Impartial reviewers found the checklists on initial response, response, choosing a spokesperson, anticipated questions and answers, and sample assignments useful and comprehensive. Many items in this toolkit merit consideration before an emergency occurs and could be revisited during an emergency. This site may be particularly useful for agencies that do not have the staff, resources, or ability to make emergency risk communication training widely available to employees.

The Success of Nebraska's Sound Bites

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (NDHHS) uses the sound bite concept to educate the public. NDHHS officials stated that sound bites are easy to create, inexpensive, and provide a great return on the initial investment. AM stations are news-driven and are more likely to use the sound bites than an FM station. NDHHS staff found that the key to a good sound bite is to make it meaningful to the listener and keep in no longer than around 10 seconds. Monthly hits on [NDHHS's sound bites](#) average around 25 each. The NDHHS stories that include sound bites are getting more airtime than the stories did with just a news release. Making stories more broadcast friendly will increase the likelihood that more radio stations will pick it up and use the information.



Minnesota's Emergency & Community Health Outreach (ECHO)

ECHO exists to ensure that people with limited English proficiency receive life-saving health and safety information—in some of the languages they understand best. In a local emergency ECHO phone, fax and web will provide details about the type of emergency and what citizens can do to protect themselves and their family. In a statewide emergency, ECHO TV will broadcast live. [More information on ECHO](#) can be found online.

FEMA Launches an Email Subscription Management System

This service from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) transmits [email alerts](#) when new and important information is posted on FEMA.gov. Through these alerts, FEMA's news and information is delivered directly to the consumer – to a personal computer, laptop or wireless device. It's a fast, effective way of being informed about updates on FEMA's website.

Surveillance

Study Shows Why the Flu Likes Winter

A [study](#) published in the October 19 issue of *PLoS Pathogens* attempted to explain why influenza cases rise during the winter months. Researchers exposed guinea pigs to the flu virus. The influenza virus is easily transmitted among guinea pigs when the temperature falls to 41 degrees and humidity falls to 20 percent; transmission did not occur at temperatures of 86 degrees and humidity levels of 80 percent. The authors noted that the virus lingers in the air longer at lower temperatures, which they believe might have something to do with cooler upper airways. The word "influenza" is Italian for "influence of the cold."

Substantial Progress in Global Avian Flu Response

The world community has made progress in its response to avian influenza, according to a new [United Nations-World Bank report](#) whose results were announced in New Delhi December 4, the first day of the New Delhi International Ministerial Conference on Avian and Pandemic Influenza. More than 600 delegates from 105 countries -- including 70 ministers from the public health and animal health sectors -- and 20 international and intergovernmental organizations convened to assess, review and exchange information on highly pathogenic H5N1 avian flu in animals and people.



Pandemic Planning

Financial Impact of a Flu Pandemic on U.S. Hospitals

In an [article](#) published in the fall issue of the *Journal of Healthcare Finance*, researchers estimated the potential financial impact of a flu pandemic on U.S. hospitals. During a severe pandemic, just two costs -- that of uncompensated care plus the cost of deferring elective surgeries -- could total \$784,592 for an average hospital, adding up to approximately \$3.9 billion in pandemic flu-related financial losses across all of the nation's hospitals.

Nations Are Slow to Share Bird Flu Samples

Indonesia will not share [bird flu virus samples](#) unless there is a guarantee developing nations will have control over their use and have access to cheap vaccines. Indonesia has held back its virus samples since August and wants guarantees from richer nations and drug makers that poor countries get access to affordable vaccines derived from their samples. Health officials from around the world failed to reach an agreement on a new virus sharing system at talks hosted by the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva in mid-November. The WHO agreed last May to revamp its 50-year-old system for sharing flu virus samples with researchers and drug firms. It had wanted its 191 member states to adopt an agreement by May but divisions remain.

The Great Pandemic: The United States in 1918-1919

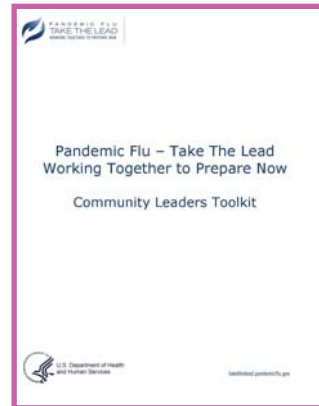
The Department of Health and Human Services created a website dedicated to the historical content of the [1918 influenza pandemic](#). The website contains biographies of those who lived during the pandemic, what it was like to live in each state during that time, and much more. The resource is available online.

Pandemic Resources for the Homeless

The state of Washington created a guide to aid in the preparedness for the homeless population. The [guide for homeless shelters](#) and housing service providers presents a basic, pragmatic, and concise approach to addressing the needs of a vulnerable and often forgotten segment of the population. It contains appropriate assumptions and planning elements to assist homeless and housing service providers in preparing and continuing to care for the homeless during a pandemic.

HHS Pandemic Planning Toolkit for Community Leaders

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has released a [toolkit to help community leaders](#) educate their constituents about steps they can take to prepare for an influenza pandemic. Titled *Take the Lead: Working Together to Prepare Now*, the 21-item toolkit is aimed at groups such as churches and business, healthcare, and civic organizations. The package of materials, posted on the HHS' pandemic planning website, includes several components that groups can adapt to meet their needs, including talking points, checklists, fact sheets, sample e-mails, and sample newsletter articles. The toolkit includes a template that groups can use to publicize campaigns to stockpile food as a community pandemic preparation activity. The package also includes ideas about incentives leaders can use to motivate community members to attend pandemic planning information sessions.



FDA Warns of Tamiflu® and Relenza® Hazards

Food and Drug Administration experts are recommending [new label warnings](#) about possible dangerous psychiatric side effects of influenza drugs Tamiflu® and Relenza®. Studies revealed 596 cases in which patients who took Tamiflu® experienced 'neuro-psychiatric events' such as delirium, delusions, or hallucinations. The episodes sometimes led to impulsive behavior and self-injury. The problems tended to occur within twenty-four hours of first taking the drug, and the majority were in patients younger than 21, mostly in Japan. Relenza® is an antiviral drug in the same class as Tamiflu®, and studies turned up 115 cases of psychiatric problems, including 74 cases in patients younger than 21. Seventy percent were from Japan. No potentially related fatalities were reported.

Other News

EPA in Court over Toxics Release Inventory

Twelve states have joined a lawsuit against the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) over recently altered regulations on companies that use toxic chemicals. The suit seeks to reverse the EPA's new rules and restore the former chemical reporting requirements. The [contested regulations](#) are part of EPA's Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) program, requiring companies to report the types of toxic chemicals they use, store, and release. The new rules, which took effect on July 1, reduce the amount of information that companies are required to report, allowing them to file shorter, less detailed forms if they store or release less than 5,000 pounds of toxic chemicals per year. The former rules required a longer, more comprehensive form whenever a company stored or discharged 500 pounds or more.

Converting Sewer Water to Drinking Water

The Orange County (California) Water District recently began operating the world's largest plant devoted to purifying sewer water to increase drinking water supplies. California regulations prohibit the purified final product from flowing directly into kitchen and bathroom taps, even though it will exceed drinking water standards. Instead, the Groundwater Replenishment System will inject the cleansed water underground, with half of it helping to form a barrier against seawater intruding on groundwater sources and the other half gradually filtering into aquifers that supply 2.3 million people with water. Garnering political and public support for the project is difficult, as the system is very expensive.



Migrant Clinicians Network

The health issues that face migrant and other mobile underserved populations are similar to those faced by other disadvantaged groups, including the poor, and especially rural poor, and recent immigrants. These are the illnesses which are caused by poor nutrition, lack of resources to seek care early in the disease process, and infectious diseases from overcrowding and poor sanitation. The Migrant Clinicians Network was founded to focus on the health of America's migrant farmworkers, and they have retained this special population as a core value while also acknowledging its leadership and responsibility in assisting with the health of other mobile, poor, and culturally displaced populations. The Migrant Clinicians Network promotes and sustains its mission through training, education, research, and program development.

MDCH Develops Carbon Monoxide and Mercury Websites

The Michigan Department of Community Health has developed two new websites to assist the public and professionals in response to carbon monoxide and mercury. The websites provide information on prevention of illness due to exposure and action steps that can be taken when exposure occurs. The websites address the needs of the general public, health departments, businesses, and workers and are found at user-friendly web addresses.



Training & Education

CDC Webcast: Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Prevention

Clinical recognition of carbon monoxide poisoning, whether recognized in the emergency room or the office, is key to understanding the burden of disease, removing both the index case and co-residents from danger, initiating treatment, and educating the public on avoidance behaviors. The CDC designates this educational activity for a maximum of 1.0 category 1 credits toward the AMA Physician's Recognition Award.

Health Literacy

Want to create nutrition and health education materials that readers will really understand? The Michigan Nutrition Network and Michigan State Nutrition Action Plan is sponsoring a "Plain Language" training on March 5, 2008 featuring Janet Ohene-Frempong who is a specialist in developing clear, effective cross-cultural consumer communications. The training will focus on eliminating jargon, abbreviations and bureaucratic language that is often prevalent in health related written materials. Participants in the one-day training will learn about the "Plain Language" movement in health literacy that strives to provide consumers with understandable written information. Participants will practice applying plain language principles and leave with the skills to create clear, effective written materials that are compassionate and understandable. Please see the training table below for more information.

M.A. in Emergency Management or Homeland Security

Siena Heights University has a Masters of Arts in Leadership program with concentrations in Emergency Management or Homeland Security. Siena Heights is now offering this in Lansing at the new University Center located at Lansing Community College.

AHRQ Respirator / Ventilator Training

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) has released an interactive cross-training program to teach non-respiratory therapy health care professionals to provide basic respiratory care and ventilator management in a public health emergency. The training program was developed in cooperation with the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response.



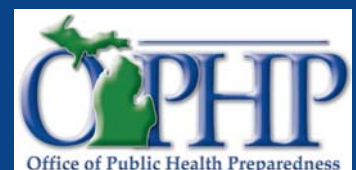
Date/Time	Event	Location
Jan. 8-10, 2008	Exercise Design & Development This three-day <u>course</u> examines the conceptual and logistical principles of how to design, develop, and conduct operations and discussion-based exercises to test a community's policies, plans, and procedures. The course also examines the requirements of the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) in all exercise types, along with practical application of exercise concepts.	Lansing
Jan. 16, 2008	Food & Ag Border Gateway Summit This one-day seminar in Southeast Michigan on the status of imported food and agricultural products. U.S. and Canadian agencies responsible for the varied components of protecting food and agriculture will provide information about current challenges and future trends, and attendees from local, state, and federal agencies as well as Canadian officials and the private sector will interact and better understand the risks, consequences, and opportunities to protect the food and agriculture sector and the public health. <u>Register online</u> and use the (case-sensitive) password "gateway".	Oakland Comm. College Orchard Ridge Campus Smith Theatre 27055 Orchard Lake Rd. Farmington Hills, MI 48334-4579

Date/Time	Event	Location
Feb. 5, 2008	Legal Issues in Emergency Management This one-day workshop discusses current laws and legal issues in emergency management and homeland security. Topics covered are the Michigan Emergency Management Act, public health codes, fire laws, police powers, mutual aid compacts, liability issues, and current disaster case law.	Lansing
Feb. 28-29 or Mar. 5-6, 2008	Basic Public Information Officers' Workshop This is a two-day workshop for entry-level or less experienced disaster Public Information Officers and staff, emphasizing the skills needed to manage crisis information in emergency and disaster events. Topics include responsibilities of a Public Information Officer in disasters, effective media interviews, crisis information planning, and Joint Information Center (JIC) management.	Gaylord Lansing
Apr. 22-24, 2008	Great Lakes Homeland Security Conference Save the Date! More details will follow.	DeVos Center 303 Monroe Ave. NW Grand Rapids, MI 49503 T: (616) 742-6500
Mar. 3-4, 2008	National Hospital Emergency Preparedness Conference The conference will provide information on the new Joint Commission standards, the new NIOSH requirements, how the federal funding stream works, the role of the corporate office in the midst of a crisis, and how to handle staff behavioral health support. CME, ANCC Contact hours and ACEH credits are offered. For more information, call Ms. Lisa Rizzolo at (202) 877-7453.	Washington, DC
Mar. 5, 2008 8:30am-4pm	Health Literacy The "Plain Language" training will feature Janet Ohene-Frempong who is a specialist in developing clear, effective cross-cultural consumer communications. Their focus is on nutrition but health literacy principles will be covered. Reservation information will be located online. The registration fee is \$35.	Michigan State Univ. Kellogg Center Big Ten Room East Lansing, MI 48824
Apr. 15-16, 2008 Jun. 17-18, 2008	PREPARE Train-the-Trainer Prepare the long-term care workforce with knowledge and competencies to deal with natural disasters and other public health emergencies. Readiness, recognition, and multidisciplinary response to disasters and emergencies. Educate core trainers. Produce an effective long-term care workforce able to treat older adults in such emergencies. Alert the public health system of emergencies. Resources for continuing disaster preparedness education. Evaluating the program's impact. There is no charge for attending this program. See the informational flyer for details. Register now as seating is limited.	Gaylord Lansing
Apr. 22-24, 2008	Great Lakes Homeland Security Conference Save the Date! More details will follow.	DeVos Center 303 Monroe Ave. NW Grand Rapids, MI 49503 T: (616) 742-6500

Date/Time	Event	Location
Apr. 30-May 2, 2008	COOP Train-the Trainer This course provides emergency planners and other interested parties with the knowledge and skills to develop Continuity of Operations (COOP) plans and then be able to offer training to other emergency planners and state, local, and tribal personnel in their jurisdiction. Look for the COOP link on the MI-TRAIN homepage for more information.	OPHP Joint Activity Room Lansing, MI
May 5-6, 2008	Emergency Planning This two-day course examines emergency and disaster planning principles and Michigan initiatives for new emergency management professionals. Planning concepts include preparedness, mitigation planning, hazard analysis, hazardous material planning, and new federal initiatives. This course is strongly recommended for all entry-level emergency managers.	Lansing
May 19-22, 2008	Effective Managing Transit Emergencies This course will provide information on understanding the importance, purpose, development, and implementation of emergency management and how it relates to the other safety functions of a transit system. Participants will learn how to better understand the emergency management concept and the role of the transit system in responding to emergency/disaster situations in both the community and transit system. Materials fee is \$55.	Grand Rapids, MI
May 22, 2008	Developing Volunteer Resources This one-day course is designed to cover a broad range of issues in disaster volunteerism expanding on the concepts presented in the prerequisite Independent Study. Topics will include spontaneous volunteerism in disasters, liability issues, marketing, recruitment, and recognition of volunteers.	Lansing
Jun. 12, 2008	Behavioral Mental Health Conference Save the Date! More details to follow.	Lansing
Jul. 8-10, 2008	Great Lakes Border Health Initiative Conference Save the Date! For more information, view the announcement flyer .	Ann Arbor, MI
Jul. 23-24, 2008	Emergency Planning for Special Needs Populations This two-day course covers the unique concerns for organizations responsible for the care of "special needs" groups in disasters. This course will expand on the concepts covered in the prerequisite Independent Study 197 by discussing definition of "special needs populations" and highlighting the planning elements of mass care, sheltering, and evacuation.	Lansing



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